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Montana
Office of Public Instruction
Denise Juneau, State Superintendent

School Finance



Welcome Ken Bailey to OPI as Assistant Superintendent of Operations

Ken Bailey has joined OPI as Assistant Superintendent of Operations, replacing Julia Dilly who retired at the end of September. Ken comes from the private sector with impressive credentials in all aspects of operations management of large enterprises. The Assistant Superintendent of Operations directly supervises four OPI divisions: IT, Measurement and Accountability, School Finance, and Centralized Services.

Contact information: [Kenneth Bailey](#), (406) 444-2562

Reporting American Indian Students for Student Achievement Gap Funding

Students identified as American Indian in the AIM system at the time the data is imported into the MAEFAIRS fall count will generate funding for the Student Achievement Gap (SAG) payment in the ensuing year.

School district business managers/clerks should verify that the *Students Imported From AIM In SAG Report* located in the MAEFAIRS system under the reports tab accurately reports the number of American Indian students enrolled in the district. If the report is not correct, please contact Nica Merala at (406) 444-4401 or nmerala@mt.gov to make the necessary changes.

Pursuant to ARM 10.21.205, changes to this designation will not be accepted after **December 31**.

Winter Student Count for ANB

The official winter count day is Monday, **December 1, 2014**. MAEFAIRS Student Count for ANB must be submitted no later than **December 12, 2014**.

The following resources are located on the OPI website:

- ANB Memo [CLICK HERE](#)

- Reporting Instructions [CLICK HERE](#)
- Step-by-Step Student Count for ANB Instructions [CLICK HERE](#)

Questions:

- For MAEFAIRS questions, or to correct data once it has been submitted, please contact Nica Meralo at (406) 444-4401 or nmerala@mt.gov.
- For AIM questions, including how to correct student information in order to be included in the MAEFAIRS Student Count for ANB, please contact the AIM Helpdesk at 1-877-424-6681, or locally at (406) 444-3800 or opiainhelp@mt.gov.

FY 2014 A-133 Audit Compliance Supplement

The FY 2014 A-133 Audit Compliance Supplement has been released. This supplement identifies federal program compliance requirements for auditors and districts who are required to have an A-133 audit. The document can be accessed at the following link: [CLICK HERE](#)

OPI contact: [Steve Hamel](#) at (406) 444-0783

Changes to FY 2014 Trustees Financial Summary

If you find a material coding error on your FY 2014 Trustees Financial Summary (TFS), you may submit a revision to Steve Hamel in the School Finance Division. As provided in 10.10.504(6), Administrative Rules of Montana, changes to the FY 2014 Trustees Financial Summary are limited to:

- Coding revisions between revenue and expenditure line items provided no change occurs in the fund balance of the budgeted funds, and
- Revisions in the balance sheet accounts provided no change occurs in the fund balance of the budgeted funds.

The Office of Public Instruction cannot process TFS changes that affect the fund balance in a budgeted fund because fund balance is carried forward to the FY 2015 budget, and a change in fund balance may impact the number of mills already levied in the fund.

Revisions should be submitted to Steve Hamel by following these procedures:

1. Photocopy the original page of the TFS with amounts to be revised ***crossed out*** and the correct amount written above or beside it.

2. When sending balance sheet account revisions, please also send any expenditure and revenue line item changes that correlate with such changes. The fund balance on the balance sheet should equal the ending fund balance shown on the statement of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balance report after the revisions are made.

3. Change any sub-totals and totals that will be affected.

4. *Sign, or initial, and date any sheets you may be sending.*

5. Scan and e-mail the revisions to shamel@mt.gov, or fax the revisions to Steve at (406) 444-0509, or mail them to P.O. Box 202501, Helena MT 59620-2501. Please submit the revisions by **December 10, 2014**, to ensure that questions or problems related to processing the changes can be addressed before school districts are closed for the holiday break.

Note that material line item coding changes that affect fund balance in the budgeted funds for FY 2014 must be reported as a prior period adjustment on the TFS for the current year (FY 2015). The district may need to adopt a budget amendment for the current year to record a prior period expenditure adjustment in a budgeted fund.

OPI contact: [Steve Hamel](#) at (406) 444-0783

Impact Aid Payments 2014

Initial Impact Aid payments have been released by the Department of Education. Currently, only schools that have requested early payment have received their vouchers. Initial payments are being paid at 50% of LOT. Districts who did not apply for early payment should be receiving their voucher in late November or early December.

OPI contact: [Nicole Thuotte](#) at (406) 444-4524

Tuition/Attendance Agreements

There are currently six (6) Legal Entities with outstanding tuition claims for the 2013-14 school year. The student's "*Days Enrolled*" must be entered in MAEFAIRS and the claim submitted before the school district will receive their state-paid tuition payment.

Districts who have not submitted their FP 14 Student Attendance Agreement or FP 14 A Special Tuition Rate forms for the 2013-14 school year should do so as soon as possible. Agreements for the 2015-16 year are also being accepted at this time.

OPI contact: [Nicole Thuotte](#) at (406) 444-4524

Elections

In preparation for the 2015 May School Trustee Election, the Office of Public Instruction is requesting that county superintendents enter district classification and trustee information for all districts in their county in the County Application. If data was entered last year, county superintendents will only need to update and submit their data this year.

District clerks should send their county superintendent a list of current board members for each school district (separate list for EL and HS).

A link to the County Application and full instructions for entering data, as well as, the Election Administrator Form for reporting current board members may be found on the OPI School Finance webpage under Election Resources: [CLICK HERE](#).

The deadline to enter this information is December 3, 2014. A list of districts required to report campaign finance information to the Montana Commissioner of Political Practices (MCP) must be sent to the MCP prior to the opening of candidate filing (Sunday, December 21, 2014). The OPI will report to the MCP on behalf of districts. District classification data will also be posted on the School Finance webpage.

OPI contact: [Nicole Thuotte](#) at (406) 444-4524

Pupil Transportation

Bus Routes (TR-1's)

By **November 1**, a district must send the county superintendent one copy of the TR-1 for each bus route and submit a TR-1 for each bus route electronically to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Each TR-1 must be signed by the board chair and county superintendent.

By **November 10**, the county superintendent must electronically mark each TR-1 submitted by the district as "Received". If county superintendents do not electronically mark TR-1's as "Received" this will prohibit districts from submitting their Bus Route Claims (TR-6's).

OPI contact: [Donell Rosenthal](#) at (406) 444-3024

Bus Inspections (TR-13's)

Semi-annual inspection of school buses must be performed by the Highway Patrol at least 30 days prior to the beginning of first semester, and by January 31 for second semester. Only school buses that pass inspection may be used to transport students and only school buses that pass inspection will receive state and county transportation reimbursements. A signed copy of completed TR-13's must be remitted to the county superintendent.

New programming has been implemented in the Pupil Transportation Application. County superintendents are now required to electronically acknowledge receipt of TR-13 Bus Inspection Reports for all school buses being operated on bus routes and verify that the buses passed inspection.

OPI Contact: [Donell Rosenthal](#) at (406) 444-3024

Salary and Compensation Expenditure Reporting

MAEFAIRS is currently available for the salary and compensation expenditure reporting. However, many districts may not be able to complete the data entry. The Salary and Compensation Expenditure Report requires that all employees who received a paycheck during the fiscal year 2014 be entered into the district's 2013-14 TOE data. For many districts, the 2013-14 TOE did not include employees hired after the TEAMS application was closed.

Although the TEAMS application is open for 2014-15 reporting, the 2013-14 TOE is not available for data input. If you need to add records to the 2013-14 TOE, contact OPITEAMS@mt.gov and your district will be added to the list of districts that need to have the TOE rolled back. You will be contacted when this option is available. Do not wait until after your 2013-14 compensation expenditure report is complete to do the 2014-15 TOE. Export your 2013-14 report from your HR system, save it to a location you can find/access at a later date, and move on to the 2014-15 year. You will need to get your 2014-15 TOE in as soon as possible, because your district needs this in place to move forward with the accreditation portion of TEAMS.

OPI contact: opiteams@mt.gov

GMM-SAF College Readiness Grants Awarded

Fifteen Graduation Matters communities were awarded grants from the Graduation Matters Montana Student Assistance Foundation College Readiness Fund. Communities will receive grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$4,000. Schools have set their sights on increasing the number of students in their schools who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by participating in programs such as College Goal Montana. Grantee schools will also participate in College Application Week this November, an effort to raise awareness about college opportunities and

increase the number of Montana students who apply for college. More information available here: [CLICK HERE](#).

OPI contact: [Jennifer Bezanson](#) at (406) 444-3526

School Wellness in Action Mini Grants

In November, Montana Team Nutrition will be releasing a *2015 School Wellness In Action Mini-Grant* Program for school districts participating in the National School Meals Program. This competitive grant program will fund eight mini grants in the amount of \$2,000 to support school districts in taking sustainable action steps for implementing the district's school wellness policy. Student wellness strategies may focus on meeting nutrition guidelines for all foods sold in schools; strengthening nutrition education (including kid's cooking programs); enhancing nutrition promotion; initiating or expanding farm to school programs; strengthening physical activity opportunities (including professional development); or applying for a healthy schools award (i.e. HealthierUS School Challenge or Montana Menu Challenge).

Funds can support staff compensation, professional development opportunities, and procurement of educational or promotional resources. The mini-grant application will be posted (by the middle of November) at the following web site: [CLICK HERE](#)

OPI contact: [Katie Bark](#) at (406) 994-5641

School Nutrition Programs Equipment Assistance Grants

Through the FY2014 Appropriations Act, the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) will fund sixteen (16), \$5,000 equipment grants to Montana school districts participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). These funds will allow school districts to serve healthier meals that meet updated meal patterns, with emphasis on increasing fruits and vegetables in school meals, improving food safety, and expanding access.

[Applications](#) are due to OPI School Nutrition Programs by **November 17, 2014**.

OPI contact: [School Nutrition Programs](#) at (406) 444-2501

Grants available for MDT/MBI Teen Traffic Safety Challenge

The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) with the [Office of Public Instruction/Montana Behavioral Initiative](#) is combining forces to promote peer-to-peer teen traffic safety. The MBI Youth Days program involves teens in leadership, service learning and community projects.

MDT is offering small grants up to \$500 to MBI Youth Days students who agree to promote teen traffic safety in their schools. Suggested topics are increasing seat belt use; reducing speeding; reducing distracted driving; and other efforts and initiatives by teen drivers to reduce crash risk.

Visit the [MDT/MBI Teen Challenge web site](#) to apply for an MDT grant.

OPI contact: [Fran Penner-Ray](#) at (406) 444-4396

MASBO Workshops

MASBO is offering a variety of workshops in November. For a description of each workshop and access to the registration form, click on the associated link below:

November 18: Technology Workshop – Hilton Garden Inn in Missoula: [CLICK HERE](#)

November 19: Elections Workshop – Hilton Garden Inn in Missoula: [CLICK HERE](#)

November 20–21: New Clerk Academy – Hilton Garden Inn in Missoula: [CLICK HERE](#)

For more information, contact Denise Williams at dwiliams@masbo.com or (406) 442-5599, or Marie Roach at mroach@masbo.com or (406) 443-0631

RESOURCES AVAILABLE ON IRS WEBSITE

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has a section of information resources for federal, state and local government employers. Click on this link [CLICK HERE](#) and check out their newsletter, fact sheets and FAQs on various topics of interest.

SCHOOL FINANCE DIVISION:

Debbie Casey dcasey@mt.gov

Donell Rosenthal drosenthal@mt.gov

Dennis Clague dclague@mt.gov

Paul Taylor ptaylor2@mt.gov

Steve Hamel shamel@mt.gov

Nicole Thuotte nthuotte@mt.gov

Nica Merala nmerala@mt.gov

Kathleen Wanner kwanner@mt.gov

Janelle Mickelson jmickelson@mt.gov

USEFUL LINKS

State Entitlement Payments to Schools: [CLICK HERE](#)

School Accounting: [CLICK HERE](#)

Forms and Publications & Tuition: [CLICK HERE](#)

Pupil Transportation: [CLICK HERE](#)

Student Count for ANB: [CLICK HERE](#)

Audit Information: [CLICK HERE](#)

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Montana Office of Public Instruction, School Finance
P.O. Box 202501, Helena, Montana 50620-2501

Montana Office of Public Instruction
Denise Juneau, Superintendent
opi.mt.gov